

CLAIMS

1. A container, especially a returnable container with a container bottom and side walls that are attached thereto in an articulated manner and can be folded down in the direction of the container bottom, so that the side walls can be folded down onto the container bottom for transport and storage when the container is empty and locked to each other when they are in the upright position, where the interlock devices on a side wall in each case consist of a pressure lever (4) that can be folded down in the direction of the container bottom, the pressure lever being provided with a locking hook (22) that in the upright position of the side walls overlaps with a locking hook (17, 23) of a locking catch (12) on the side wall adjacent at the container corner in order to interlock the side walls, characterized in that the locking catch in the side wall is supported and/or designed with such spring-like elastic characteristics and with a locking protuberance that projects inwards from the interior face of the side wall as to assure that the locking catch (12) will build up an elastic return force when it is pressed outwards due to the swivelling of the pressure lever.
2. A container in accordance with claim 1, characterized in that the pressure lever (4) is provided with a tongue (7) that continues its gripping part (5) and of which the inner edge (11) acts as releasing edge that makes contact with the part (21) that is set back with respect to the locking protuberance of the locking catch (12), which preferably consists of a locking strip (15) and is provided as releasing part to displace the locking catch (in the direction of the arrow G).
3. A container in accordance with claim 1 or claim 2, characterized in that the tongue-like locking catches are in each case provided with a lead-in ramp (16) that runs obliquely inwards.
4. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the lead-in ramp (16) and/or the oblique surface (16) connects with the locking strip (15) and/or the locking protuberance.

5. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the locking catch (12) is provided at its free end with a section (21) that is set back with respect to the locking strip (15) and/or the locking protuberance.
6. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the free end of the locking catch (12) is designed as a hook (23).
7. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the locking catch (12) is situated in the manner of a resilient tongue within an opening (19) of the side wall (3) and with its edges delimits a preferably narrow slot (13) between it and the side wall on both sides
8. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the locking catch (12) has its spring-like elastic property determined by the length of the tongue, the thickness of the tongue, the width of the tongue and/or the thickness of the articulation point (14) between the tongue and the side wall.
9. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the spring force of the locking catch (12) is matched with the pressure lever in such a manner that when the pressure lever (4) is manually and swivelled, the locking catch (12) will be pressed outward (direction of the arrow G) to release the interlock.
10. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the pressure lever (4) is joined to the side wall (1) in an articulated manner by means of two narrow webs.
11. A container in accordance with claim 10, characterized in that the tongue (7) of the pressure lever extends between the narrow webs (6).

12. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the articulation point (14) of the webs on the side wall constitutes the rotation centre and swivelling point of the pressure lever (4).
13. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the articulation point (14) is designed with a dome-shaped gripping part (20) and or pressing part..
14. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the releasing edge (11) for displacing the locking catch (12) is designed in such a manner as to protrude inwards as compared with the pressure lever (4) and the tongue (7) that continues the gripping part (5) (lever effect).
15. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the releasing edge (11) is constituted by the free end of a web (24) that projects preferably in a substantially orthogonal direction (lever effect).
16. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the free end of the tongue (7) of the pressure lever (4) is designed as a locking hook or locking catch that overlaps (engages) with the locking hook (23) and the locking catch (12) in the upright position.
17. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the front edge of the locking catch is designed with a back taper (25) for interlocking with the protruding edge (22) of the pressure lever (22).
18. A container in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the locking catch (12) tapers back at an angle α of between 3 and 20°, preferably between 5 and 15°, and that the edge of the pressure lever with which it interlocks is designed with a complementary oblique face (25).